National Nuclear Security Administration
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NNSA Completes First Shipment of TA-18 Nuclear Materials

Sensitive material will be out of TA-18 by late 2005

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has successfully completed the first shipment of nuclear materials from Los Alamos National Laboratory Technical Area 18 (TA-18) to the Device Assembly Facility at the Nevada Test Site.

The shipment was completed today in accordance with federal and state transportation regulations.

"Completion of this programmatic material shipment to Nevada re-enforces NNSA's commitment to relocate TA-18 activities to a newer, more secure location," said Dr. Everet Beckner, Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs. "NNSA remains focused on consolidating TA-18 nuclear materials in a manner that supports safety and security requirements."

NNSA plans to have the most sensitive nuclear materials out of the TA-18 inventory by September 2005, and the rest by 2008.

The TA-18 complex has the nation's only facilities capable of performing general-purpose nuclear materials handling and criticality experiments. These experiments provide unique training to a variety of federal agencies in areas such as nuclear materials safety, emergency response in support of counterterrorism activities, and safeguards and arms control in support of programs aimed at controlling excess nuclear materials.

NNSA announced in December 2002 that the TA-18 mission would be moved to the high security Device Assembly Facility.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear energy. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without underground nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

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